

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 062003
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 062003

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO USUN NEW YORK, BUENOS
AIRES FROM MAR DEL PLATA MARCH 18:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L MAR DEL PLATA 0040

PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR DR. BOURNE

PASS CEQ FOR WARREN

FOR IO/IEP, L/UNA, NEA/PAB

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SENV OCON UN BG

SUBJECT: UN WATER CONFERENCE

REF: MAR DEL PLATA 0029

1. BANGLADESH PLENARY STATEMENT: BANGLADESH MAIN-
TAINED THEIR NON-POLITICIZED APPROACH IN THEIR PLENARY
STATEMENT, DELIVERED BY ADMIRAL KHAN. NO SPECIFIC
REFERENCE TO THE FARAKKA BARRAGE PROBLEM WHATSOEVER
WAS MADE. BANGLADESH APPEAR TO BE TAKING A VERY
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PAGE 02 STATE 062003

RESPONSIBLE APPROACH, GOING OUT OF THEIR WAY NOT TO
ANTAGONIZE INDIA. IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THIS MODUS
VIVENDI WILL BE MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE
BUT IT IS AN IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE SO FAR.
PERTINENT PORTIONS OF PRINTED TEXT OF BANGLADESH
STATEMENT ARE REPRODUCED IN PARAGRAPH 2.

2. BEGIN TEXT, PARAGRAPHS 5-9:

(5) IN SPITE OF OUR BEST ENDEAVOURS BANGLADESH
FACES SEVERE CONSTRAINTS BEYOND OUR CONTROL. AMONG
LIMITATIONS ARE THOSE INHERENT IN ITS POSITION AS
ONE OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED AMONG DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES AND CONSEQUENT DEPENDENCE ON EXTERNAL AS-
SISTANCE TO FINANCE LARGE UNDERTAKINGS. MAJOR
PROBLEMS ARISE OUT OF GEO-PHYSICAL FACTORS RELATING
TO ITS FLAT TERRAIN, WIDESPREAD SEASONAL VARIATION
IN THE FLOWS OF ITS SURFACE WATERS AND IMPRACTI-
CABILITY OF STORING MONSOON WATERS FOR DRY-SEASON
USE. IT MAY BE NOTED THAT 93 PERCENT OF THE
CATCHMENT AREAS OF ITS RIVERS LIES OUTSIDE
BANGLADESH. 80 PERCENT OF RIVER FLOWS ARE ALSO
GENERATED FROM WITHOUT. THIS FACTOR IS HYDROLOGI-
CALLY UNIQUE. THE FULL POTENTIAL OF DEVELOPING
BANGLADESH'S WATER RESOURCES IS, THEREFORE,
TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION.
HEREIN LIES THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM THAT BESETS
US AND ONE THAT CANNOT BUT CONSTITUTE A TEST CASE
FOR THE ENTIRE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. WITHOUT
ASSURED SUPPLIES OF WATER BANGLADESH'S ENITE
PROGRAM OF WATER DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE FRUSTRATED.

(6) MR. PRESIDENT - THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE
UN WATER CONFERENCE IS TO PROMOTE THE LEVEL OF PRE-
PAREDNESS THAT IS NECESSARY NATIONALLY, REGIONALLY
AND INTERNATIONALLY TO AVOID A WATER CRISIS OF
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PAGE 03 STATE 062003

GLOBAL DIMENSIONS WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DECADES. IN
THIS CONTEXT BANGLADESH FEELS THAT ACTIONS AND
PRIORITIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL HAVE BEEN ALREADY
RECOGNIZED AND ENUNCIATED IN VIRTUALLY ALL ITS AS-
PECTS IN THE CONSOLIDATED ACTION - PROGRAM AND
NUMEROUS THEMATIC PAPERS. IT IS IN THE FIELD OF
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION THAT ANTICIPATORY ACTION
AND INITIATIVES ARE NECESSARY TO MANAGE AND
DEVELOP WATER RESOURCES COMMON TO TWO OR MORE
STATES. IT IS INTERESTING THAT WHILE THERE IS
INCREASING RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE AND
NEED FOR PROMOTING COOPERATION IN THIS REGARD, THAT
ACTIONS PROPOSED TOWARDS THIS END ARE REALLY LIMITED.
IT IS TRUE THAT ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE MANAGEMENT
OF SHARED WATER RESOURCES TOUCH ON DELICATE INTER-
STATE RELATIONSHIPS. I FEEL NEVERTHELESS, THAT NE-
GLECTING A RESPONSIBLE COLLECTIVE APPROACH TO THESE
ISSUES COULD OPEN THE DOOR TO POTENTIAL CONFLICTS.
IT MUST NOT BE FORGOTTEN THAT THE ABSENCE OF

TREATIES ON A LARGE NUMBER OF RIVER BASINS, THE ADVANCE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ON WATER-RELATED FIELDS AND THE FINITE RESOURCES AND COMPETING CAPACITIES AND PRIORITIES OF WATER ALL CARRY THE POTENTIAL OF SERIOUS DISPUTE AND MISUNDERSTANDING AMONG CO-RIPARIAN STATES.

(7) THE NEED FOR HARMINIZING NATIONAL ACTINS TAKING INTO ACCOUNT EFFECTS ON CO-BASINS STATES, FOR ADOPTING COMMON STANDARDS FOR CONTROLLING POLLUTION AND FOR UNIVERSALLY APPLICABLE RULES OF CO-OPERATION IN THE ALLOCATION, UTILIZATION AND CONSERVATION OF WATER RESOURCES AND, TO THIS END THE EVOLUTION OF APPROPRIATE MECHANISMS FOR THE EXCHANGE OF DATA, FOR NOTIFICATION AND CONSULTATIONS, AND THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES HAS TODAY BECOME AN IMPERATIVE FACT OF OUR INTERDEPENDENCY.
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PAGE 04 STATE 062003

THE UN WATER CONFERENCE PROVIDES AN UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO FORSTER PROGRESS IN THESE DELICATE MATTERS AND TO MUSTER THAT NECESSARY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION THAT COULD NOT ONLY LEAD TO ENHANCED COOPERATION BUT ENCOURAGE IT.

(8) IT IS IN THIS SPIRIT THAT MY DELGATION HAS SUBMITTED SPECIFIC PROPOSALS HIGHLIGHTING THE CRITICAL NEED AND INDEED DUTY OF STATES TO COOPERATE ON THE QUESTION OF SHARED RESOURCES IN RECOGNITION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF SOVEREIGN EQUALITY AND THE TERRITORAIL INTEGRITY OF ALL STATES AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITY UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW TO ENSURE THAT ACTIVITIES WITHIN THEIR JURISDICTION OR CONTROL DO NOT CAUSE DAMAGE TO OTHER STATES OR AREAS BEYOND THE LIMITS OF NATIONAL JURISDICTION.THEIR MAIN THRUST IS DIRECTED TOWARDS STRENGTHENING EXISTING INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL WATER LAW AS A MEANS OF PUTTING COOPERATION AMONG STATES ON A FIRMER BASIS PARTICULARLY THROUGH EXPEDITING THE CODIFICATION AND PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENTOF THE RULES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

(9) A PARTICULAR CONCERN OF MY DELEGATION IS ALSO THE CONCOMITANT NEEDSTO STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF THE UN SYSTEM TO PROVIDE MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO STATES BY MONITORING, REVIEWNG, COLLECTING AND DISSEMINATING INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCES ON THE QUESTION OF SHARED WATER RESOURCES, AND TO STIMULATE NATIONAL WILL AND CAPACITY. WE BELIEVE THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION SHOULD ALSO

BE GIVEN TO THE NEED FOR SETTING UP A UNITED
NATIONS CENTER ON INTERNATIONAL RIVERS WITH
REGIONAL BRANCHES, TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO
STATES AND BASIN COMMISSIONS NEEDING SUCH AS-
SISTANCE ON THE QUESTION OF SHARED WATER
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PAGE 05 STATE 062003

RESOURCES. END TEXT.

3. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION AMONG THE
DELEGATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS PUT FORWARD BY
THE BANGLADESHIS (SEE REFTTEL) AND USDEL IS ANXIOUS
TO RECEIVE DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS.

4. BOTH BANGLADESH AND INDIA CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR
U. S. SUPPORT. RAWLS UNQUOTE VANCE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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